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Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR

No. 2 SANITARY AREA

DEVON

1953

Medical Officer of Health—Duncombe Steele-Perkins

		Sanitary Inspector	Surveyor
Axminster Rural	...	L. H. White	F. J. Smith
Honiton Borough	...	R. B. Bailey	R. B. Bailey
Honiton Rural	...	F. J. Baxfield	F. J. Baxfield
Seaton Urban	...	P. Bradley	P. Bradley

Annual Report

for No. 2 Sanitary Area for 1953,

comprising :—

AXMINSTER URBAN, AXMINSTER RURAL, HONITON BOROUGH, HONITON RURAL, AND SEATON URBAN.

DUNCOMBE STEELE-PERKINS, *Med. Officer of Health.*

I have much pleasure in presenting my Annual Report for the year 1953, and which deals with the general Health and Sanitary Administration of No. 2 Sanitary Area of Devon.

With the amalgamation of Axminster Urban and Axminster Rural, as from April 1st last year, my work is now concentrated with four Councils only, and from an administrative point of view, it has certainly eased my clerical work considerably, although naturally it has not affected the size of my administrative Area.

With the East Devon Water Board now getting into its stride, I am hoping to see great developments in the extension of water supplies in the near future. These water supplies are very urgently needed in a large number of Parishes, especially some Parishes where the supplies are extremely bad from a Bacteriological point of view, but one has to bear in mind, that the moment a piped water supply is laid on to a Village, there is always, within a few months, an outcry for a sewage disposal scheme, and very necessary they are. to deal with the increased flow of sewage, which the ordinary septic tank will not deal with, and in a very few months a serious nuisance arises.

My relations with the East Devon Water Board are exceedingly good and we can both be of great assistance to each other, although the main administration of Water Supplies is now practically taken out of my hands.

Infectious Diseases, with the exception of Measles and Whooping Cough, have given me very little anxiety during the year, and it is a great pleasure to record that no cases of Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, or Food Poisoning were notified during the year. This is an exceptionally good record, especially with Polio, as it is the first year for several years that we have been entirely free of this disease.

A special effort has been made during the year in persuading the food caterers to taking a greater interest in the cleanliness of food handling, and constant supervision and inspection, with literature dealing with the question, has been widely distributed, and I am glad to say I have found great co-operation with the traders in carrying out my requests. The greatest trouble I have had, is to persuade the traders to see that their assistants have a proper and

regular supply of clean overalls or aprons when handling food, but after constantly pointing this out to certain traders, they are becoming much more co-operative, and I think I shall have little trouble in the future.

I think probably the greatest achievement during the year was the commencement of the very large scheme of Sewage disposal at Beer. This was a very urgent problem, as Beer Beach was a terrible disgrace, and now at the time of issuing this report the Scheme has been carried out in its entirity, and Beer can look forward to an era of great prosperity, and there is nothing now to prevent them building there to their hearts content, and I foresee a very great future to this little pearl of seaside resorts becoming in the near future a very large residential area, and what is more a clean beach with no risk to all bathers.

During the year, the South West Regional Board again sent their Mass Radiography Service to Axminster. The response of the general public was very good indeed, and the results obtained were excellent.

It may interest Councillors to see a chart of the Infectious Disease which occurred in No. 2 Area, and which I herewith append.

	Axminster Rural and Axminster Urban from 1/4/53	Axminster Urban Jan-Mar. 31st, 1953	Honiton Borough	Honiton Rural	Seaton Urban
Scarlet Fever	10	1	4	1	2
Whooping Cough	93	1	15	37	13
Measles	69	1	126	97	3
Food Poisoning	0	0	0	0	0
Polio	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria	0	0	0	0	0
Pneumonia	6	0	23	26	0
Dysentery	0	0	0	0	1
Erysipelas	2	0	2	1	1
Opthalmic Neonatorum	1	0	0	0	0
	181	3	170	162	20

Total Cases 536

No. of cases—

Scarlet Fever	...	18	Diphtheria	...	0
Whooping Cough	...	159	Pneumonia	...	55
Measles	...	296	Dysentery	...	1
Food Poisoning	...	0	Erysipelas	...	6
Polio	...	0	Ophthalmic Neonatorum		1

I will deal more fully with this and other matters under each Area.

Lung Cancer.

The increase of this Disease in certain parts of the country has loomed very largely in the press during the past twelve months, and very extensive investigations are in progress to ascertain the cause. It appears to me that the greatest increase is in the industrial areas where the people live and work in an atmosphere heavily laden with what is known as Smog. The enormous increase in motors, a large number using heavy diesel oil, which in times of fog pollutes the atmosphere so heavily, that at times, people suffering from chest complaints have great difficulty in breathing; whether this is a predetermined cause of Cancer remains to be proved, but certainly the increase, if any, in the Rural Areas, is not anything to be unnecessarily alarmed about.

I append a chart giving the number of cases in my Area for the past four years, but I would point out that the figures for Honiton Borough now include the deaths which occurred at the Marlpits Hospital, so is not a true record of the actual figures for Honiton Borough.

	Lungs				All types of Cancer including Lungs			
	(1950	1951	1952	1953)	(1950	1951	1952	1953)
Axminster Urban Population 2,667	0	0	0	0	8	7	7	1
Axminster Rural Population 11,480	0	1	3	5	31	24	32	28
Honiton Borough Population 4,596	1	0	0	4	9	1	3	19
Honiton Rural Population 6,855	2	0	2	1	8	14	15	8
Seaton Urban Population 2,815	1	2	0	1	12	10	5	6
	4	3	5	11	68	56	62	62

HONITON BOROUGH—Marlpits Hospital. The four cases of Lung Cancer were admitted to the Marlpits Hospital from outside the Borough, and strictly speaking, in the Borough proper, there were no deaths of Cancer of the Lung.

AXMINSTER URBAN.

January 1st to March 31st, 1953.

Area	667 acres
Population	2,667
Rateable Value	£22,565
Penny Rate produces	£91 0s. 0d.

Infectious Disease.

	1952	1953
Measles	0	1
Diphtheria	0	0
Whooping Cough	0	1
Scarlet Fever	0	1
Para Typhoid	0	0
Erysipelas	0	0
Pneumonia	0	0
Puerpural Pyrexia	0	0
Poliomyelitis	0	0
Opth. Neon.	0	0
	0	3

Deaths.

Number of Deaths registered from all causes :---

1952—(15 Males, 17 Females)	32
1953—(5 Males, 5 Females)	10

Live Births.

Number of Births registered :—

1952—(24 Males, 21 Females) and includes 1 illegitimate birth	45
1953—(5 Males, 2 Females)	7

Still Births.

Number of above registered :—

1952—(1 was registered)	1
1953—(0 were registered)	0

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1952—0 Deaths were registered	0
1953—0 Deaths were registered	0

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age.

1952—0 deaths were registered	0
1953—0 deaths were registered	0

Deaths.—The number of Deaths registered for the three months, January 1st to March 31st, 1953, were 10, as against 32 in 1952, and the causes of death were as follows:—

	1952	1953
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	2	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	0	0
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	0	0
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms ...	5	0
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System ...	5	0
Coronary Disease, Angina	3	1
Other Heart Disease	2	1
Other Circulatory Disease	1	0
Influenza	0	1
Nephritis	1	0
Other Defined and ill-Defined Diseases ...	0	2
Bronchitis	1	0
Diabetes	0	0
Hypertension with Heart Disease	5	0
Pneumonia	2	0
Congenital Malformation	0	0
Accidental Deaths	0	2
Other Diseases of Respiratory System ...	2	1
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum ...	2	0
Hyperplasia of Prostrate	1	0
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	0	1
	32	10

Births.—The Births were seven for the three months—January to March (inclusive).

It is very difficult to comment very much for the three months January—March, 1953, as on April 1st the Urban and Rural Districts were amalgamated, and I can only quote the figures for the three months, as the remaining nine months is embodied with the Axminster Rural.

AXMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT.

Area	... ...	52,135 acres
Population	... ...	13,660
Rateable Value	...	£35,965
Penny Rate produces	...	£340
No. of Parishes ...	...	16

Deaths.

1952—(78 Males, 83 Females)	...	...	161
1953—(80 Males, 76 Females)	...	...	156

Live Births.

1952—(79 Males, 68 Females) 147

3 illegitimate births were registered and are included in the above total of 147.

1953—(90 Males, 76 Females) 166

6 illegitimate births were registered and are included in the above total of 166.

Still Births.

1952—2 Still Births were registered	...	...	2
1953—2 Still Births were registered	...	...	2

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1952—3 Deaths were registered (0 illegitimate)	...	3
1953—3 Deaths were registered (0 illegitimate)	...	3

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age.

1952—3 Deaths were registered (0 illegitimate)	...	3
1953—3 Deaths were registered, (0 illegitimate)	...	3

Infectious Disease.

The following cases of Infectious Disease were notified in 1953:—

			1952	1953
Measles ...	...	...	2	69
Pneumonia ...	...	...	5	6
Diphtheria ...	...	...	0	0
Whooping Cough	...	...	59	93
Scarlet Fever ...	...	...	4	10
Erysipelas ...	...	...	0	2
Typhoid ...	...	...	0	0
Puerpural Pyrexia	...	...	0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	2	0
Dysentery ...	...	...	0	0
Food Poisoning	...	...	7	0
Ophthalmic Neonatorum ...		...	0	1
			79	181

Infectious Disease.

With the exception of a small outbreak of Measles (69 cases), and Whooping Cough (93 cases), we have had an exceedingly good year in freedom from Infectious Disease. That, in a population of over 13,000, is very good indeed.

As regards the Scarlet Fever (10 cases), these are so mild now that they are hardly worthy of comment. I have not seen a real old-fashioned case of Scarlet Fever for many years now, and these children are up and about in 10 days, and it generally happens that only *one case* occurs in a house of a large family, but as they are notified as such by the Doctor in attendance, I have to record them.

Deaths.—These shew a slight decrease for the District, 156 compared with 161 in 1952, and also include 9 months of the Urban.

The chief causes of death in the Area were :—	1952	1953
Respiratory Tuberculosis	1	0
Other Infective and Parasitic Disease ...	0	0
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	7	9
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	5	3
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	1	0
Malignant Neoplasm, Bronchus	3	5
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms ...	16	11
Vascular Lesions of the Nervous System ...	21	23
Coronary Disease, Angina	18	18
Hypertension with Heart Disease... ...	3	5
Other Heart Disease	36	21
Other Circulatory Disease	9	5
Influenza	1	3
Pneumonia	3	2
Bronchitis	6	15
Other Diseases of Respiratory System ...	0	3
Duodenal Ulcer	0	2
Gastritis and Diarrhoea	0	0
Nephritis	1	5
Hyperplasia of Prostate	4	0
Childbirth Abortion	0	1
Congenital Malformation	1	1
Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases ...	17	16
Motor Accidents	5	1
All other Accidents	1	5
Suicide	0	0
Leukaemia	0	0
Diabetes	2	1
Pregnancy	0	1
	161	156

Births.—These remain a little above the average, 166 as against 147 in 1952, and include 6 illegitimate births, but again I point out that this includes 9 months inclusion with Axminster Urban.

Water Supplies.

This is now more or less the responsibility of the East Devon Water Board which are rapidly getting into their stride, and in a few years we shall, I hope, see a great extension of piped water throughout the Area.

Sewerage.

Now that water supplies are gradually being extended to villages in the Area we shall be automatically faced with demands for proper Sewage Disposal Works in each village, and to carry out the necessary schemes will eventually mean a very heavy expenditure, but there is nothing we can do about it, except to realise it has to be done, and to take the worst cases first.

Housing.

Progress has again been made, and we must now be getting to the period when the building of more Council Houses will not be necessary, and a great deal of the building passed over to private enterprise.

I have much pleasure in presenting the Sanitary Inspector's Report, and I would like to pay a special tribute to the excellent manner in which he has carried out his work.

Water Supplies.

The private water supplies have all been sampled, and the following fall into Class 1 of the Ministry of Health's classification for piped supplies :—Axmouth, Beer, Colyton, Lyme Regis Water Co. (Rousdon).

An unsatisfactory sample was obtained at Combpyne, which was eventually traced, and this is now also of Class 1 standard. These private supplies are being sampled every 3 months, and throughout the district there has been no serious shortage of water.

Sewerage.

Only 5 of 14 Parishes are sewered. Other districts that have had water systems laid within the last few years are now badly in need of sewerage systems.

Meat, Milk and other Foods.

Killing and Inspection is still being carried out at the Regional Abattoir at Tiverton. During the year the following food was condemned—60lbs. Dried Fruit ; 38lbs. Imported Meat ; 7lbs. Offal ; 321lbs. Tinned Foods ; 592lbs. Home Killed Meat ; 1½ stones Dog Fish ; 17lbs. Cod Fillet.

Ice Cream.

No action has been necessary with regard to Ice Cream (Heat Treatment, &c.) Regulations, as no Ice Cream is manufactured in the district.

Clean Food Campaign.

1. *Number of Food Premises—*

Type	No. in Area	No. Inspected
(a) Grocers & Fruiterers	17	7
(b) Butchers ...	10	10
(c) Bakers ...	8	8
(d) Fishmongers ...	4	4
(e) Confectioners ...	6	6
(f) General Stores ...	6	6
(g) Restaurants ...	6	3

2. *Number of Premises—*
   (a) Registered under Section 14

Manufacture of Sausages	9
Sale of Ice Cream only	41
Fish Frying	3

   (b) Number of Dairies registered under Milk and Dairies Regulations (1949) 6

3. (a) *Inspections of Registered Premises—*

Manufacture of Sausages	9
Sale of Ice Cream only	28
Fish Frying	3

   (b) Inspection of Other Premises handling food ... 43 (see paragraph 1).

Comments.

(a) Hot Water and washing facilities have been instituted at two Butcher's premises.

(b) Hot Water and washing facilities to 7 Grocers.

(c) Hot Water and washing facilities to 1 General Store.

4. Educational activity in a Rural Area is most difficult, but plastic covered notices encouraging handlers of food to wash their hands often, and at appropriate times, have been erected in all premises handling food.

5. *Disposal of Condemned Food—*
   (a) Tinned Food—by incineration.
   (b) Meat—returned to Tiverton for processing.

Food Poisoning.

There were no outbreaks of Food Poisoning during the year.

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

Collections are carried out in all parts of the whole district and is working quite satisfactorily. A fresh dumping area has been opened at Membury, but will only suffice for a short period. There is a great need for a suitable site in the northern part of the Area to serve the district for a long period. Adequate and suitable sites for controlled tipping are most difficult to find.

Rodent Control.

The part-time Rodent Inspector has kept his district inspected and carried out treatments. There have been no major infestations.

Housing.

The old American Hospital Camp (Millwey Rise) is still used for housing families. All the Nissen Huts have been demolished, and this advent has certainly raised the housing standards. Their demolition was long overdue.

Rural Housing Survey.

During the year 637 Houses were inspected, and records and specifications of works necessary to make them in all respects fit for human habitation were compiled. Just over half the district has now been completed, and should prove valuable when the new Housing Acts are in force, as the information is relatively current.

Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year.

(not included in above)

1. Total number of Dwelling Houses inspected for Housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... 61
2. Number of Dwellings found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 7

Remedy of defects without service of Formal Notices.

Number of defective Dwelling Houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority or its Officers 24

Factories Act, 1937.

Factories	No. on Register	No. of Inspections	Informal Notices served
Mechanical	77	51	-
Non-Mechanical	15	8	-
Total	92	59	-

Particulars	Defects found	Defects remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector
Want of Cleanliness ...	2	2	-
Sanitary Conveniences :			
1. Unsuitable ...	3	3	-
2. Not separate for sexes	-	-	-
3. Insufficient ...	-	-	-
4. Other Offences ...	-	-	-
Total ...	5	5	0

General Inspections.

Dairies	4
Disinfection following Infectious Diseases ...	1
Water Supplies	1
Inspection of drains	24
Condemned Food, Visits and Re-visits	44
Petroleum Inspections	22
Public Health Act, Section 269 (Caravans) ...	25
Shops Act	12
Inspections—Public Health Act, 1936, Section 91, &c.	122
Rodent Inspections	21
Miscellaneous (Explosives Act, Requisitioned Houses, &c.)	9

HONITON BOROUGH.

Area	... ...	3,134 acres
Population	... ...	5,058
Rateable Value	... ...	£33,833
Penny Rate produces	...	£136 14s. 11d.

Deaths.

Number of Deaths registered from all causes :—

1952—(24 Males, 23 Females)	...	...	47
1953—(64 Males, 103 Females)	...	...	167

Live Births.

Number of Live Births registered :—

1952—(31 Males, 18 Females)	...	...	49
2 illegitimate births were registered.			
1953—(35 Males, 25 Females)	...	...	60
4 illegitimate births were registered.			

Still Births.

1952—2 Still Births were registered	...	...	2
1953—3 Still Births were registered	...	...	3

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1952—2 Deaths were registered	...	...	2
1953—1 Death was registered	...	...	1

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age.

1952—2 deaths were registered	...	...	2
1953—1 death was registered	...	...	1

Infectious Disease.

The following cases were notified in 1953 :—

		1952	1953
Scarlet Fever	...	1	4
Diphtheria ...	...	0	0
Whooping Cough	...	2	15
Measles ...	...	6	126
Erysipelas ...	...	1	2
Pneumonia ...	...	1	23
Puerpural Pyrexia	...	0	0
Poliomyelitis ...	...	0	0
Food Poisoning	...	2	0
		13	170

As you will observe, no cases of Diphtheria, Poliomyelitis or Food Poisoning were notified to me, and Diphtheria seems now to belong to the by-gone days.

Deaths.—The number of deaths registered were 167 as compared with 47 in 1952. This enormous increase is due to the deaths at Marlpits Hospital (130 being included in the return), as having occurred in the Borough, so strictly speaking the deaths in the Borough were 37.

Birth Rate.—The increase of births is also due to the large number of confinements taking place in Marlpits Hospital. 60 births were recorded in 1953, as against 49 in 1952.

The chief causes of death were :—

	1952	1953
Tuberculosis, Respiratory ...	2	2
Other Tuberculosis Infective and Parasitic Diseases	1	0
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	0	0
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung	0	4
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	0	3
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	1	2
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms ...	2	10
Leukaemia	1	1
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System ...	9	33
Other Heart Disease	8	51
Other Circulatory Disease	1	7
Pneumonia	1	2
Bronchitis	4	13
Other Diseases of Respiratory System ...	1	0
Hyperplasia of Prostate	0	2
Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases ...	6	14
Motor Accident	1	2
Coronary Disease	5	3
Hypertension with Heart Disease ...	1	2
Influenza	0	9
Ulcer of Stomach	1	1
Pregnancy, Childbirth Abortion	0	0
All other Accidents	1	1
Suicide	1	0
Diabetes	0	3
Nephritis	0	1
Gastritis	0	1
	47	167

I am very glad to be able to report that there were no cases of food poisoning during the year, and the standard of cleanliness in food shops has very much improved. I have, however, during the year, had to point out to certain shops the necessity that the assistants should wear clean overalls, and that there should be a higher standard maintained in clothing. I would add that the shops referred to have in all cases met my wishes in this matter.

Sewerage.

As pointed out last year, the Sewage works are working to capacity, and with the new Military Housing Site, and the extensive Council House building, the question of enlarging the works has become very serious indeed.

Lavatory Accommodation.

The question whether additional lavatory accomodation should be provided at the West end, has been before my Council. As you know, we have provided excellent accommodation in the centre of the Town, which with the facilities provided by the Cafes and Public Houses, should be quite equal to the requirements of the Borough with a population of 5,058.

In my opinion, the type of person who is making a nuisance of himself, not only in the West end, but in other Areas as well, will not use a Lavatory if provided for him, and the answer to my mind is entirely one for the Police, and not to saddle the Rates with this additional accommodation, which in my opinion is unneccesary.

Water Supplies.

Supplies to the Borough from the East Devon Water Board have been ample and of a high standard of purity.

I have much pleasure in adding Mr. Bailey's Report as follows:

Housing.

Permanent Pre-war Houses	...	...	137
Permanent Post-war Houses	...	...	149
Prefabricated Houses	...	...	12
			298

The Council's Housing Programme is proceeding well. The Marwood Estate development has been completed, and consideration is now being given to the erection of a further 50 houses on the Fairfield Estate. It is hoped that building will be commenced in 1954.

Five private enterprise houses were erected during the year.

The War Department are also constructing 46 permanent houses in connection with Heathfield Camp.

General Housing Inspections under the Housing Acts.

80 inspections have been recorded under the Housing Acts.

Water Supplies.

The town is supplied with water by the East Devon Water Board.

Sewage Disposal.

The Council are awaiting a report of their Consulting Engineer in respect of the enlargement of the works. In the meantime the works have been maintained in good condition, but no action has yet been taken by the Council in respect of the large deposits of accummulated sludge. As reported last year, the position in respect of this sludge is very unsatisfactory.

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

Regular weekly collections in the town area are being maintained, and no complaints have been received in the past 12 months in respect of the collections. Salvage of paper, &c., is still maintained. Controlled tipping is carried out on land owned by the Council, and it appears that there is enough tipping area for a considerable number of years to come. The litter problem is still with us.

Rodent Control.

I am pleased to report that the Council have again appointed a part-time rat catcher.

Public Conveniences.

Public Conveniences are provided in the town, and I am pleased to report that less damage has occurred this year than previously.

Slaughterhouses.

I assume that the Council will be concerned with the licensing of Slaughterhouses in the Borough during the forthcoming year, and I see no difficulties arising in this respect. There are four Slaughterhouses which can be put into use.

Meat and Food Inspections.

Approximately five cwts. of food of all kinds have been condemned during the year. I note that unsound tinned goods are on the decrease.

Bakehouses.

There are seven Bakehouses in the town, and generally these are in good order.

Food Poisoning.

There have been no cases of food poisoning in the Borough during the past 12 months.

Factories and Workshops.

There are 47 Factories and Workshops entered in the Register. 16 premises are registered for outworkers. 27 premises have been inspected, and notices given in respect of one.

Swimming Pool.

The small Swimming Pool owned by the Council has been restricted in use by the Medical Officer of Health. Every effort is made to ensure safety from a Public Health view, but I do not like the "hit and miss" method of chlorination, and am always worried as to what might happen from the use of this pool. No cases of infection have yet arisen.

Verminous Premises.

One case of verminous premises had to be treated during the year.

Ice Cream Regulations.

All premises selling ice cream are registered. There is no ice cream manufactured by the "Hot Mix" Method.

Clean Food Regulations.

Clean Food Byelaws are in operation in the Borough, and inspections of premises are regularly carried out. The general co-operation of the traders in this matter is good.

The following is a classification of premises in respect of Food :

Cafes ...	13	Confectioners ...	12
Fish and Chips ...	2	Bakers	5
Butchers ...	7	Dairies	5
Grocers & General Stores	14		
		Total	58

General.

With the advent of Slum Clearance and the New Housing Acts, also the fact that it may be that meat inspection may be put into practice in the Borough, it appears that it may be impossible to carry out all the duties required by the Council by one Officer only, and it may be that at some future date the Council will have to consider this question.

HONITON RURAL DISTRICT.

Area	... ...	61,265 acres
Population	... ...	6,898
No. of Parishes	... ...	22
Rateable Value	... ...	£31,212
Penny Rate Produces	...	£124

Infectious Disease.

		1952	1953
Scarlet Fever	... ...	4	1
Diphtheria	... ...	0	0
Whooping Cough	...	27	37
Measles	... ...	3	97
Pneumonia	... ...	5	26
Erysipelas	... ...	0	1
Puerpural Pyrexia	...	0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	2	0
Food Poisoning	...	3	0
		44	162

Deaths.

Number of deaths registered from all causes:—

1952—(46 Males, 33 Females)	...	...	79
1953—(26 Males, 21 Females)	...	...	47

Live Births.

Number of Live Births registered:—

1952—(72 Males, 51 Females)	...	...	123
1953—(4 Males, 47 Females)	...	...	111

The number of illegitimate births registered was 3, and are included in the above total of 111.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1952—0 death was registered	...	...	0
1953—4 deaths were registered	...	...	4

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age.

1952—0 deaths were registered	...	...	0
1953—3 deaths were registered	...	...	3

Still Births.

1952—Number of Still Births registered was 3 (0 illegitimate).

1953—Number of Still Births registered was 0

Births.—These show a decrease, 111 as compared with 123 in 1952.

Deaths.—The number of Deaths registered were 47, as compared with 79 in 1952. The chief causes of death were :—

	1952	1953
Respiratory Tuberculosis	0	0
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	2	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung	2	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	2	0
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	1	1
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms ...	8	5
Leukaemia	0	0
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System ...	9	9
Coronary Disease, Angina	10	6
Hypertension with Heart Disease... ...	0	2
Other Heart Disease	20	8
Other Circulatory Disease	1	0
Other Diseases of Respiratory System ...	0	0
Pneumonia	0	2
Bronchitis	2	2
Influenza	0	2
Duodenal Ulcer	3	0
Hyperplasia of Prostate	3	0
Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases ...	11	3
Motor Accidents	0	1
Suicide	0	0
All Other Accidents	1	3
Nephritis	2	0
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases ...	1	0
Diarrhoea	1	0
Congenital Malformation	0	1
	79	47

Infectious Disease.

We have not been quite so free of Infectious Disease as we were in 1952, but out of the 162 cases recorded, 97 of the cases notified were Measles, and 37 cases were Whooping Cough. However, no deaths occurred from these two slight epidemics.

During the Winter months there was a sharp increase in Pneumonia, chiefly amongst the aged, and due to Influenza, 26 cases being notified.

No cases of Polio, Diphtheria or Food Poisoning were notified, which is very satisfactory.

Water Supplies.

The water supplies are now the responsibility of the East Devon Water Board, and they are now beginning to show their existence is justified.

Water is urgently required at Awliscombe Council Houses where the supply has become very dangerous from pollution, and is quite unfit to drink.

Council Houses.

Steady progress has again been made, and I hope soon we shall be in a position to complete all building and leave the effort to private enterprise, and in the meantime concentrate on putting some of the cottage property in better and more habitable condition. I am certain this will be cheaper than building.

I have great pleasure in presenting my Sanitary Inspector's Report:

Meat and Food Inspection.

There were no slaughter-houses operating in the rural district during 1953, and consequently no meat was inspected. Routine inspections were carried out of grocers' shops and bakehouses, and no complaints were noted.

Refuse Collection.

Subsequent to the re-organization in 1952, refuse collection and disposal has proceeded smoothly. The three tips in use have been well maintained, and controlled tipping practised. During modifications at Feniton Sewage Works, large quantities of earth were removed and spread over the refuse tips at Branscombe and Upottery, while the construction of a service road at Payhembury resulted in very adequate covering to the Payhembury tip by excavated material. The salvage of paper and scrap metal has been carried out continuously.

Rodent Control.

Rodent control has been carried out during the year by the Council's own operator. The necessary treatment has been carried out on refuse tips and sewers which are the Council's responsibility, and although a number of takes were observed, there were no heavy infestations to report. A number of privately owned premises were treated, and inspections were commenced of all farms and agricultural premises. No heavy infestations were noted, and consequently no statutory action was taken.

Housing.

During the year, a total of 4 Council houses was completed with a further 8 under construction. 12 private enterprise houses were completed during the same period. Two properties were inspected under the Housing Acts. In one case the premises were found to be unfit for human habitation, and an undertaking not to re-let was accepted from the owner.

Factories Act.

Factories and workshops situated in the area have been periodically inspected, and no defects were noted.

Water Supplies.

All water supplies in the district are now under the control of the East Devon Water Board. A scheme has been submitted to that body with regard to Plymtree. In order to erect Council houses in this parish, the Council must first provide an adequate water supply. As there seems to be no possibility of the Water Board supply being extended from Ottery St. Mary within the near future, it is proposed to sink a borehole to supply the new houses, this work to be carried out as a housing charge. Further investigation into this matter has resulted in the Board being approached with a view to sinking a larger borehole to supply the whole of Plymtree, this to be a temporary supply until the regional scheme is in operation. The matter is still under consideration by the Board.

A number of samples were taken of private supplies at the request of the owners. No serious pollution is reported.

Sewage Disposal.

The maintenance of existing sewage disposal plants dealing with the drainage from Council houses, were maintained by the Council's staff. A number of settlement tanks were modified in order to simplify pumping out and cleansing.

With regard to village schemes, at Feniton, work was carried out to the inlet sewer, which was being damaged by the continual washing of the water in the stream. Modifications were also carried out to the Branscombe settlement tank, and the effluent pipe cleaned out.

The Ministry's approval was finally received for the Wilmington Sewerage Scheme to go to tender, and the contract documents will be prepared with a view to the necessary advertisements being inserted in the press early in 1954.

A sewerage scheme has also been prepared for Plymtree in order to abate serious nuisances which cannot be abated by private action, and it is hoped that this scheme will be submitted to the Ministry early in the New Year.

Ice Cream Regulations.

All premises where ice cream is sold, have been registered in accordance with the regulations. No ice cream is prepared by the hot mix method in this district.

Visits.

A summary of visits carried out during the year is as follows:

Water Supplies	...	24
Drainage & Sewerage	...	209
Refuse Disposal	...	20
Rodent Control	...	5
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	...	103
Building Inspections	...	335
Town & Country Planning	...	71

SEATON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Area	... ...	1,190 acres
Population	... ...	2,907
Rateable value	...	£34,550
Penny Rate produces	...	£139 6s. 1d.

Deaths.

1952—(27 Males, 30 Females)	...	...	57
1953—(24 Males, 28 Females)	...	...	52

Live Births.

Number of Live Births registered :—

1952—(14 Males, 13 Females)	...	...	27
0 illegitimate births were registered.			
1953—(14 Males, 14 Females)	...	...	28
2 illegitimate births are included in the 28 registered.			

Still Births.

1952—0 were registered	...	...	0
1953—1 was registered	...	...	1

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1952—0 were registered	...	...	0
1953—0 were registered	...	...	0

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age.

1952—0 were registered	0
1953—0 were registered	0

Infectious Disease.

The following cases were notified during the year :—

		1952	1953
Scarlet Fever	...	2	2
Puerpural Pyrexia	...	0	0
Whooping Cough	...	5	13
Measles ...	...	2	3
Pneumonia	...	6	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	0	0
Diphtheria ...	...	0	0
Dysentery ...	...	0	1
Erysipelas ...	...	0	1
		15	20

Deaths. The number of deaths registered from all causes were 57 as compared with 68 in 1952. The causes of death were:

	1952	1953
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	2	1
Other Tubercular Disease	0	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Bronchus	0	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	1	4
Malignant Neoplasm Uterus	0	1
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms ...	3	2
Diabetes	2	0
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System ...	6	8
Coronary Disease, Angina	10	9
Hypertension with Heart Disease ...	3	1
Other Heart Disease	12	17
Other Circulatory Disease	1	3
Other Diseases of Respiratory System ...	0	0
Ulcer of Stomach	3	1
Pneumonia	1	0
Bronchitis	0	0
Gastritis	0	0
Nephritis	0	0
Hyperplasia of Prostate	2	0
Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases ...	4	2
Accidents	3	0
Suicide	1	0
Influenza	1	0
Leukaemia	0	1
	57	52

Infectious Disease.

Again it gives me very great pleasure in being able to record a very excellent Health Report for Seaton. As you will see from the Infectious Diseases Chart there were no cases of Pneumonia. The 13 cases of Whooping Cough were exceedingly small, considering there was a large amount of this disease in No. 2 Area. Looking at the Chart I think we can be more than satisfied with the health conditions in this seaside resort.

Housing.

It is with great satisfaction to be able to report progress with the Housing Schemes so urgently needed in Seaton. The type of house being built is a great credit to the Seaton Urban Council, and are some of the best in my Area.

Water Supplies.

The new chlorination plant is working very satisfactorily, and the water delivered to Seaton consumers is now absolutely safe, and any extraneous matter getting into the supply is not due to any fault at the Works, which are now highly efficient.

I have much pleasure in presenting the report of my Sanitary Inspector, who again has put in a tremendous amount of work.

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector's Report.

As your Sanitary Inspector, the following visits were made during the year:

Routine Inspections (Public Health & Housing Acts)	224
Inspection of Dairies	3
Disinfection following Infectious Disease ...	Nil
Detailed Housing Inspections	2
No. of Visits in regard thereto	7
Visits with regard to Water Supply	12
Inspections of Buildings in course of erection ...	187
Testing of New Drains—Visits	74
Inspection of Ice Cream Establishments ...	12
Food Shops re Unsound Food	32
Rodent Investigations	15
Petroleum Establishments	10
Factories and Workshops	26

Housing.

A further 23 houses for the Council were commenced during the year in Elizabeth Road and four in Newlands Park. 10 private enterprise houses were built and finished.

Two houses were declared unfit and incapable of repair at reasonable expense. In both cases the Council accepted undertakings from the respective owners not to relet until made fit for occupation. One house is now used as a store, and the other has been reconditioned and made fit.

Water Supply.

New mains have been laid in Townsend, and also on the Self-help Housing Site, Harepath Road.

The quality of the water, as in previous years, remained consistently satisfactory both chemically and bacteriologically. Samples were taken of raw and treated waters at the Works and at points in the town on two occasions in the course of the year. The three pressure sand filters at the Works were emptied and thoroughly cleaned and new sand used for re-filling.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

The new works to serve the Elizabeth Road Housing Site and the Scalwell Lane area, and the sewers serving this area, came into use in December. The Council's Consulting Engineers surveyed the sewerage system of the town and presented a preliminary report.

Dairies.

There is one registered dairy in the town from which milk is sold.

Food.

As last year a large quantity of tinned food was condemned. Some fresh meat was condemned because of bone taint. This condemned food was disposed of by incineration.

Ice Cream.

There are 18 retailers of Ice Cream. Most retailers sell in the packs or cartons as received from the wholesaler.

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

A local enquiry was held regarding the proposal for a new incinerator on a site near Colyford Road. This proposal was not pursued in view of the advice given by the Ministry, and also because of the very high cost of such a scheme, and an arrangement was made with the Axminster Rural Council whereby a tip was placed at the Council's disposal in the adjacent parish of Beer. Incineration has now been discontinued on the site near Elizabeth Road.

The sale of metals and rags was reasonably good, but the market for waste paper was very poor indeed.

Public Health Nuisances.

Matters connected with defective drainage in Holiday Camps, private buildings and foul ditches have been dealt with informally.

The apparent lack of good drainage from the lands in the vicinity of Station Road because of a sluice under the railway line being at too high a level, is causing my Council concern, and the matter is being pursued with the Railway Engineer.

Cemetery.

We are virtually at a standstill in the matter of a suitable piece of ground for a cemetery.

Rodents.

We have no major infestations. The treatment for rats in sewers has periodic attention.

Factories and Workshops.

The few light industries in the Town give no cause for complaint.

Camping and Caravan Sites.

The caravan site at Tower Cafe was increased to 15 caravans, and a caravan site to accommodate a large number of caravans near Station Road was approved.

Your obedient servant,

DUNCOMBE STEELE-PERKINS,

Medical Officer of Health.